

Action. Applicant respectfully submits that new Claims 43-65 are proper under Section 112.

In the Office Action, Claims 1-5, 14-18, 27 and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 5,280,576 (Cao). The remaining claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Cao.

As shown above, Applicant has cancelled all of prior Claims 1-42 without prejudice. Moreover, Applicant has carefully drafted new Claims 43-65 in light of the Examiner's detailed comments on the prior claims, and respectfully submits that new independent Claims 43 and 54, together with the remaining claims dependent thereon, are patentably distinct over the cited prior art for the following reasons.

The present invention as defined in new independent Claim 43 is directed to an outline forming apparatus comprising memory means for storing first information indicating positions of first outline points for forming an outline of a pattern having a predetermined weight, and for storing second information, provided for each first outline point individually, for deciding positions of second outline points forming an outline of the pattern having a weight different from the predetermined weight. The apparatus further comprises input means for inputting weight information indicating a desired weight of an outline of the pattern to be generated, decision means for deciding a position of each of the second outline points for forming an

outline of the pattern having the desired weight based on the first and second information, and generating means for generating an outline of the pattern using the second outline points at the positions decided by the decision means.

As a result of the above-recited structure, each first outline point, representing the fundamental outline of the pattern, has second information associated therewith to enable the apparatus to decide the positions of second outline points forming an outline of the same pattern, but having a weight different from the predetermined weight. Consequently, when the outline of the pattern needs to be changed to make the resultant pattern lighter or bolder, the thickness at each first outline point can be changed independently, based on its respective second information. Therefore, it is possible to obtain the pattern in various weights (various thicknesses) at high quality.

Cao is directed to a method of changing the weight of a pattern from outline points corresponding to a predetermined weight. As understood by Applicant, in Cao's method as shown in Figure 3, new lines (24-1 to 24-7) are created when a pattern 10 is lightened. Each of the new lines is created parallel to an associated line (22-1 to 22-7), which is defined by two control points (14-1, 2 and 5-9). Then, the intersections between two of the new lines are used as new control points (20-1, 2-4 and 7-9). Accordingly, as understood by Applicant, in Cao's system, when a pattern is

lightened or made bolder, the thickness of every portion of the pattern is changed in the same way.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that Cao does not teach or suggest the present invention as defined in new Claim 43, wherein second information is provided for each first outline point individually and used for deciding the positions of second outline points forming the outline of the pattern at a different weight.

New independent Claim 54 is a method claim corresponding to apparatus Claim 43, and therefore is believed to be patentably distinct from the cited prior art for the same reasons as Claim 43.

Applicant has reviewed the remaining prior art cited in the Office Action, and has failed to find any teaching or disclosure that would remedy the above-described deficiency of Cao as a reference against new independent Claims 43 and 54.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to allow new Claims 43-65.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 758-2400. All

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Respectfully submitted,

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